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LIFE'S SORROWS,

BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

When I gaze back to the years that have flown
Like fairy ships on a calm summer sea,
And see that the pathway once rose-bestrewn
Has thorns but thorns and leaves left for me,
I feel the springtime of life ne'er returns,
Though the sorrowing heart in anguish yearns.

When the clouds of the present thick with gloom
Blot the guiding-star that directs our course,
And hope's heavenly blossoms have ceased to bloom.

And feelings of joy are turned to morose;
Life loses the charm it once held in store,
And the world-weary soul, oppressed and sore.
But life has its shades, and life has its light,
And if its duties are done no regret
Need come to us like a withering blight,
Nor let the shadow of despair descend,
Though the pathway is drear as desert wast,
Endurance will scatter fresh roses at last.

Then if we gaze back to years that have flown,
We need not pine 'neath the present in grief;
Yet the heart will doubly feel when alone left;
With none to share or give comfort's relief;
If on the promise of hope we depend,
Life's sorrows will turn to joys in the end.

RED ROB.

The Boy Road-Agent.

BY OLL COOMES,

AUTHOR OF "DAKOTA DAN," "BOWIE-KNIFE BEN," "OLD HURRICANE," "HAWKEYE HARRY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER V.

THE CENTAUR.
The idea of Asa Sheridan, the miner, being Red Rob seemed preposterous; and yet Alviso's announcement fell like a lightning bolt upon the agent. He glanced at the interpreter, then at the unsuspecting object of his emotions, seeming totally undecided as to what course he should pursue. His first impulse, however, was to take advantage of the Mexican's revelation and secure the notorious young outlaw. But a second thought dismissed the first. He passed the book back to Alviso and consulted his thoughts.

Red Rob, the Boy Road-agent, had, for two years, been a terror to New Mexico; and his name was spoken in fear by some, in praise by others. He had been termed a modern Claude Duval with but a single exception, that of his age. Red Rob had never been represented over eighteen years of age; although none of his victims could be found that had ever seen his face; he always went in disguise.

It was the rich that feared him, for the poor had nothing that he wanted, and so they rested in comparative ease. Deeds of heroism, daring adventure, acts of kindness to emigrant parties, had won for him a kind of a terrible fascination.

If Sheridan was Red Rob, Miller could see no reason why he was called the Boy Road-agent, for he was a man in years. This gave him reason to believe that Alviso was mistaken in the man's identity; and yet, there were hopes of his being correct, for the Mexican was acquainted with all the different characters in the territory.

Heretofore all attempts to capture the young mountain bandit had proved fruitless. Miller knew this; and, as he gazed upon the handsome face and athletic form of young Sheridan, and measured his probable strength, he wondered what success would attend an attempt to arrest him, and whether or not the old man Walraymond and Nathan Wolfe were his companions in outlawry.

The rustle of a bush and the soft, light tread of hooved feet not far away, arrested the agent's attention. In an instant every one of the group turned in the direction of the sound to behold a human face peering at them over a low bush. It was a man's face—aged and wrinkled, and covered with an immense yellow beard, fully two feet in length. The hair was also long, grizzled and disheveled. Neither hat nor cap was upon his head. There was a vacant expression in the great bearded face, a wild, unearthly glare in the dark, sunken eyes.

The man stood about two rods away, where the extremity of the light, blended with the shadows, created a dim twilight. His body was concealed behind a bush, and, judging by the night of this, he was of low stature. For several moments the party regarded the stranger with a look of silent awe.

Nathan Wolfe seemed more agitated than any. He seemed to recognize the countenance.

"Miller, first to break the silence, cried: 'Who comes there?'

The man made no response, but turning his head glanced from side to side, then resumed his vacant stare toward the fire.

The agent challenged him again, but no response.

Then Miller drew his revolver. "Answer, or I'll fire," and he raised the weapon.

Still no response from the stony-faced intruder.

The agent pressed the trigger and the report of his pistol crashed through the night. He did not aim at the man's head, but above it, hoping to frighten him and elicit a response.

Scarcely had the reverberations of the pistol-shot started the forest echoes, ere the form of an animal sprang from behind the very bush where the man stood, and stopped within the full glare of the light.

An exclamation of involuntary horror burst from every lip. An awful apparition stood before them.

Upon the body of the animal was a human head and face!—the same bearded face that had stared at them over the bush!



On the body of the animal was a human head and face—the same bearded face that had stared over the bush!

There was no doubt in the evidence of their eyes—it was no delusion—no mental phantom, but a living, moving animal, with the head and face of a man!

It stood within the full glow of the camp-fire and glared at them.

Every man recoiled with an involuntary shudder of vague horror. The face of the Mexican became ghastly, and his teeth chattered as with an ague fit.

"Ay, señor!" he gasped, seizing Miller by the arm, while his staring eyes were fixed upon the unnatural monster. "It is it, señor—the Centaur!—half-human, half-horse!"

There was no reply. Every eye was still fixed upon the creature whose gaze seemed possessed of a diabolical fascination—a fascination that they could not repel.

However preposterous it seemed to them, there was no denying the living fact. The proof was the creature itself—there before them a terrible living horror—the form of a deer with a human face and head. The long, yellow beard hung low upon the breast, and the long, grizzled hair straggled in disordered masses about the neck; while those awful, stony-looking eyes, glaring out at them from beneath their massive brows in the wavering, garish light, seemed to dart rays of hellish enchantment into the souls of the astonished men.

A raven suddenly croaked near by. It broke the awful spell, and the monster turned its bearded face and bounded away into the gloom.

Half a minute had seemed an hour.

The monster left the party speechless. Walraymond was the first to speak.

"Age of wonders—monsters." He spoke in a calm, natural tone.

"Yes, it beats me—it beats all of us," said the Indian agent.

"Certainly, certainly," mused Walraymond, reflectively. "Surely we are not living in the age of fable—centuries in advance of time. Surely that mass rising yonder into the clouds cannot be old Mount Olympus."

"It is harmless," replied Nathan Wolfe, terribly agitated, and apparently troubled.

"Senor," said Alviso, "do not be deceived in the Centaur. These deserted valleys and pueblos bear the hoof-prints of those ancient demons—are mute witnesses of the bloody work of the Centaurs."

Miller saw that the unnatural fear which leads to superstition was getting the better of himself and men, and so he at once dismissed the subject; and as a preface to further excitement, wrapt his blanket around him and laid down to rest, pillowng his head in the hollow of his saddle.

A soldier and one of the miners were detailed to take the first watch. The rest of the party followed the agent's example, and were soon asleep on the ground.

"It's as I tell you, senor. It's a Centaur. They have dwelt in the valley of the *del los Pinos*, these many, many centuries."

The Mexican was superstitious. He spoke in a solemn, earnest tone—almost fiercely.

Miller recalled the many strange stories he had heard of this mysterious band—stories which had come down through centuries in traditions. He remembered hearing an old Navajo tell something of a strange race of people with bodies like animals, that dwelt in the valley of some of the San Juan tributaries; but he accepted the story as one of the legends of the country, and thought no more about it until that moment.

James Miller was an old soldier; a man of education, and one of the last to give credence to stories that find their origin in superstition. But what was he to believe now!—how was he to dispose of the monster? He had seen it move, and knew it was no optical delusion—nothing spiritual, but a tangible object of the material world. Perhaps he was in a frame of mind that was not calculated to repel the conviction forced so suddenly upon him. The deep solitude of the place, the gloom of night, the weird sounds coming, as it were, from the realms of Nowhere, and the revelation that Alviso had just made concerning Sheridan—all these, perhaps, contributed in overcoming his incredulities of all appertaining to the mysterious. Nothing begets uneasiness and vague, restless fear so quick as the depressing influence of gloom and solitude, and the stoutest heart and bravest mind can no more dispel them from the breast than they can the shadows of night from around them. There is an awful resemblance between death and darkness. The horrors of the one are in the shadows of the other.

"My God, Miller is dead!"

And he spoke the truth. A bullet of one of the unseen foes had struck the agent on the top of the head, passed downward behind the eye, producing instant death. He had not moved a muscle nor uttered a word.*

Every man grasped his rifle, expecting an attack. But they were happily disappointed.

No foes appeared. Alviso crept away into the shadows to reconnoiter.

Ben Thomas turned to Miller, who still slept on.

Thomas spoke to him, but he stirred not.

He bent over him and shook him lightly at first, then vigorously. Still he could not rouse the sleeper.

Thomas drew aside the blanket from the agent's face, upon which the light now shone.

He was lying upon his left side. His eyes were closed, his lips slightly parted and wreathed in a faint smile that seemed the expression of a pleasant dream. A dark line ran diagonally across the man's brow. Thomas looked closer, and saw it was the *track of blood*! Then he started up and cried out:

"My God, Miller is dead!"

And he spoke the truth. A bullet of one of

the unseen foes had struck the agent on the

top of the head, passed downward behind the

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moved a muscle nor uttered a word.*

A gloom darker than the shades of night fell upon the party. The death of the agent was a terrible blow to his friends and country.

And to still add to this loss and sad state of affairs, Alviso returned to camp with the startling information that a large party of Utes was in the valley—that they had stolen

every animal but a single one, and that to

stay there would be to court certain death.

Upon a hasty consultation, it was decided to abandon the camp at once. A messenger was dispatched on the only remaining horse to Fort Defiance, with the news of Miller's death.

Under the somber pinons, where the San

Juan Mountains keep their eternal watch,

James H. Miller, the soldier and Christian,

was laid to rest. A grave had been hollowed

out with one of the miner's spades, and wrapped in a blanket and lowered into the grave.

When the last shovelful of dirt was placed

over the dead, all turned toward Walraymond,

who had unassumingly taken charge of the

burial. The glare of a pine torch lit up the

scene—the mound of fresh earth, the silent

figures around it, their faces looking ghostly

in the dim, uncertain glow of the wavering

light, and the most conspicuous of all, the ma-

gentic form of Basil Walraymond, with bared

head, and his long, venerable beard looking

holy in the dusky shadows.

A dead calm fell upon the little party. The

old man lifted his eyes toward heaven; his

lips moved—he was praying. His voice was

soon asleep on the ground.

The camp-fire burned low. The coyotes

chattered nearer—the pinons rustled softly in

the night wind. The watchers, stationed under the darkness, kept their silent ward.

low and tremulous at first, but finally swelled out clear and strong and solemn as the tones of a funeral bell. His whole frame shook with the intensity of his emotions, as, with all the fervency of his great, noble soul, he lifted his voice to heaven in behalf of the soul of the departed man.

It was a wild, weird and solemn scene.

Asa Sheridan watched and listened in breathless silence, his whole soul seemingly absorbed by the solemn words of the speaker. A mist gathered over his eyes, and something came up in his throat and almost choked him. Was it remorse? Did the humble supplication of the old man recall something of the forgotten past?

—reach his heart?

When Walraymond had concluded his prayer, Sheridan turned to Wolfe, and said, in a low tone:

"Strange, mysterious, noble old man! From whence came he?—who is he?—what is he? Wolfe, I'd give all the wealth of New Mexico, if I possessed it, for answers to these questions."

"Soldiers, what do you propose to do now?"

It was the old man who spoke, in his full, rich tone.

"We will have to return to the fort;—but you?"

"I shall follow those Indians."

"I, too," said Sheridan.

"And I," added Wolfe.

"Our time is not our own," said Ben Thomas. "It belongs to our country. But for this we would accompany you."

"Do your duty, soldiers," said the old man, solemnly. "We may meet again some time, so good-by."

He shook hands with the soldiers, took up his rifle, and turned to leave.

The wind stirred the branches above, the leaves rustled mournfully.

Then the wall of darkness around them seemed to give birth to a hundred spirits of evil. A hundred shadowy figures floated out of the gloom into the light of the camp-fire.

They were savages. The war-whoop of the Utés burst upon the silent night—echoed and re-echoed among the mountain caverns, and rolled along in quavering intonation through the valley.

Sheridan, Wolfe and the soldiers fled into the forest gloom. Basil Walraymond alone remained to contend with the savage hordes. His giant form, rendered conspicuous by his white beard and gray hair, towered above the seething mass around him—a grand, majestic soul, struggling with the legions of darkness.

He discharged his rifle at the foremost Indian. The red-skin fell dead. Then he clubbed his weapon. With the first blow the stock was shattered, but it left him with a deadlier missile—the heavy iron barrel, which crushed and tore its way through the ranks of the foe. The old man stood his ground. The savages fell away before him. He was a pivot around which the deadly gun-barrel swept like an iron arm whirled by some irresistible power.

From the darkness of the woods, young Sheridan and Nathan Wolfe saw the danger of their old friend, the heroic, mysterious Basil Walraymond.

They loved the old man—they resolved he should not fall

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The gunners looked in the direction indicated, and sure enough, saw another party of horsemen sweeping toward them. They were about the same distance away that the other party was. St. Kenelm examined them with the glass.

"Boys, we are doomed! They are Kiowas!" He spoke in a deep, husky tone.

By this time the mules and horses had been secured. The women were huddled together behind the barricade of wagons, trembling with a violent terror.

Every man and boy, black and white, stood with rifle in hand ready for the affray. A pallor was upon each face, but it was that pallor with which the brave meet death. A fierce determination burned in each eye.

"The Arapahoes are the strongest," said St. Kenelm; "perhaps one volley from our rifles, followed by one shot from the cannon, will check their advance. We can then meet the Kiowas with our rifles and a discharge of grape."

In the mean time great excitement prevailed among the women. The absence of Octavia was known to all, and the general belief that she was in imminent danger caused great uneasiness. Old Aunt Shady was nearly distract ed, and refused, like Rachael, of old, to be comforted.

"Do not grieve, Aunt Shady," said the kind-hearted Maggie Boswell. "Octavia may be the only one of us that'll escape."

"Oh, Miss Maggie, Ijis' know she'll be murdered and den killed by dem awful Ingings!" wailed the old negress. "If we's killed, den de poor young'uns'll be wusser off dan ebber. Oh my Octaby! whod take keeb or her den? Oh, honey! dis world's jis' full ob sin blacker dan my face. It'll brake my heart—Ijis' can't stand it—oh, Lor', Ijis' die!"

And her fat form shook like an aspen under the intensity of her grief.

"But, Aunt Shady," persisted Maggie, with tears in her eyes, "Octavia may be—"

"Hush, chile—honey dear!" interrupted the old negress; "ole Shady haven't libed dis fifty years for nuffin'. She know what danger am—she see de awful war i': do Soul!—she seed—Oh, Lor', sabe my soul!"

The last exclamation was occasioned by the sudden, thunderous crash of the cannon, that shook the earth till Aunt Shady fairly bounced. She stuffed her chubby fingers into her ears, and looking up at her friends with a lugubrious wail, cried out:

"Childrens, let's pray."

The shot put a check to the advance of the Arapahoes, but the Kiowas kept straight on toward the train, as if exerting every effort to reach it in advance of the Arapahoes. The emigrants held their fire until the Kiowas were within fifty paces, then the cannon belched forth its leaden hail and was succeeded by volley after volley, in rapid succession, from the deadly Winchesters. The carnage was fearful; more than a score of savages were unhorsed. A dozen ponies dashed wildly in every direction over the plain—some with reeling, tottering riders, others riderless entirely.

The animals of several of the Kiowas became unmanageable with affright, and dashed up to the very muzzles of the repeaters that were still pouring forth an almost continual stream of fire and lead.

The Arapahoes saw this fearless movement of their neighbors, and supposing it was made out of sheer bravery, determined not to be outdone by them, and rallying, bore down again to the scene of conflict.

This encouraged the Kiowas, who, maddened by their terrible loss, charged the emigrants, with all the savage vengeance of their souls thrown into their unearthly yells. But our friends were ready for this combined onset.

The cannon, loaded almost to the muzzle, belched across the plain, and was immediately followed by the discharge of the rifles.

The ranks of the foe were nearly swept away. The slaughter of men and horses was frightful; but the survivors pressed on and drove the gunners from the cannon—back in side of their frail defense of wagons.

Yells of triumph now issued from the redskins' lips, for, although dearly purchased, victory seemed within their grasp.

A scene that defies description now followed this first advantage of the foe. Above the tumult of the battle rose the cries and screams of the terrified women, the wild baying of the frightened mules, and the shouts of the defenders.

But, suddenly, above the din of all, the wild clangor of a horn rung out, and a score of white horsemen charged like madmen upon the savages and put them to rout.

And the emigrant train was saved!

Way over the plain in all directions scattered the defeated savages in the wildest disorder, and on in swift pursuit swept the white horsemen, the clangor of the horn, the report of pistols and the shouts of the men ringing out in the air.

Eagerly our friends watched the wild pursuit, and anxiously they awaited the return of those unknown men, to whom they were indebted for their lives and all they possessed. But they waited in vain. The mysterious horsemen swept away out of sight and were seen no more.

Fearful as the conflict had been, and great as was the savages' loss, the victory of our friends was almost bloodless and without loss. Two men only had been wounded, but one of these severely; and three mules had broken from the corral and escaped.

The greatest fears of Octavia's safety were now entertained. A large number of the defeated redskins had fled toward Conejos, and as they were not being pursued, they would, in all probability, overtake the maiden.

They dare not weaken the defensive force of the train by sending out men in search of her. They were afraid the Indians might rally and renew the attack, and between the two extremities, moments of agonizing suspense and fear held the party inactive.

Old Aunt Shady waddled to and fro, wringing her hands in the bitterest despair and bewailing the unknown fate of her young mistress.

A riderless pony, with smoking flanks and steaming sides, suddenly dashed up the road from the direction of Conejos.

All recognized the animal—it was Octavia's.

Sadness and deepest sorrow fell upon every heart.

What was to be done? Evening was coming on, and Conejos was fully four miles away, now lost in the shadows of the grim old mountain beyond.

CHAPTER VII.

A NEW CHARACTER ON THE STAGE.

OCTAVIA ST. KENELM was in peril. The very danger which she might have escaped, and which was threatened her friends, befell her. She rode back until the train was in sight, and was a witness to the conflict. She saw the savages charging down upon her friends. She saw the cannon belch its death-hail across the plain. She heard the yells of the savages and the shouts of her friends. Still she kept on. In the awful tumult of battle there was some horrible fascination that led her closer and closer to the train. Her attention was divided between the conflict and that little band of horsemen sweeping across the plain. She was satisfied they were rangers, and that that gallant, handsome boy was their leader. She could see him at their head—she saw him sweep down upon the red-skinned and them to flight. Then her young heart throbbed with the wildest joy, and its love went out in silent admiration and thanks for the noble deed of the noble boy and his followers.

Octavia's eyes swam in a mist of tears as she watched the dying Indians and pursuing rangers; and when they at last singled out one form among the many, they followed it so closely that she failed to notice the approach of two savages—a Kiowa and Arapaho—until escape was impossible.

The Arapaho dashed alongside of her and seized her pony's reins, while the Kiowa rode up, and seizing the terrified girl around the waist, dragged her from her animal's back, and threw her across the withers of his own in front of him.

Octavia's pony became so unmanageable that the Arapaho was compelled to release his hold, when it dashed away down the road.

The two Indians turned southward and galloped away with their fair, helpless captive. Both were young men, and chiefs at that. They were the leaders of the defeated bands that had been in every direction across the plain.

They rode on in silence for nearly a mile, when they were joined by several warriors—an equal number of each tribe. Among the Kiowas was a white renegade.

The warriors were highly elated over their leaders' success in capturing the beautiful girl. It compensated them, in a measure, for their recent terrible loss; yet these warriors little dreamed of the struggle going on in each chief's breast.

The whole party moved on at a slow, weary pace, and when they had journeyed something near five miles, it became necessary for them to halt and rest their overtaxed animals.

Octavia was lifted to the tree and bound to its trunk in an upright position. A lariat was passed several times around her body, between her feet and neck, and the trunk of the tree, so that she could scarcely move a muscle.

Thus secured, the renegade and two savages went back to the starting point, and poor Octavia found herself alone in a situation that well-nigh drove her mad. There were no hopes for escape, and as she pondered over her situation, a new fear took possession of her mind. Knowing how treacherous the savages were, she felt that it was no more than probable that the one beaten in the race would bury a tomahawk in her brain.

With eyes swimming in tears of agony, she watched the group of savages. She saw the chiefs mount their animals and turn, facing down toward her. She saw the savages part on either side of them; she saw the renegade step out to one side and elevate the muzzle of a rifle in the air. She saw a little cloud of smoke puff out from the weapon—a sharp, splitting report crashed through the air—a savage yell followed, and the racers shot away over the plain!

At the same instant a terrible yell of surprise and the discharge of rifles told the two racers that something was not right behind; but they would not, they dared not, glance back to inquire the cause of the alarm. One movement—the turning of the head—might lose either one the race. But they were not long to remain ignorant of the cause of the wild confusion which they knew was not occasioned by their excitement over the race, for close behind them a voice, mingled with the clatter of other hoofs than their own animals, suddenly rang out, clear and distinct:

"C'ar the track, smoky-skins, for hyar we come a-boomin'!"

The next instant a horse and rider shot past them like an arrow!

The man had dashed from the grove behind the savages, the instant the signal for the start was given to the chiefs, and all recognized by the clatter of other hoofs than their own animals, suddenly rung out, clear and distinct:

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"Yes, of course; but it is necessary that she should sign the receipt for it." There was a strange look on the Judge's face as he spoke.

"I kin take the book right up along with me," Bill replied.

"I can't spare it at present," the Judge said quickly. "But, Bill, you can tell Miss Jinnie that the box is down here and she can come down for it, sign the receipt and then I'll send it up."

The driver looked at the Judge in astonishment.

"Say, what's up, Judge? Never knew you to act so cranky afore. Want to see the little gal, eh? got somethin' for to say to her?"

"Well, yes; perhaps I have," the Judge said, slowly.

"S'pose I'd better not come back with Jinnie."

"It might be as well to let her come alone."

"All co-rect; a wink's as good as a nod to a blind horse," Bill said, sagaciously. "I'm off. Say, Judge, you ain't a-shinin' up at the gal that runs the Eldorado, are you 'cos I'm goin' for her myself, and you don't stand a ghost of a show alongside of me!"

"For I looked in the glass an' found it so; the handsomest nig in the country, oh."

Then Bill took his departure.

"I wonder what on earth the old cuss wants with Jinnie?" Bill muttered as he walked up the street toward the hotel. "I cotched him the other day when he was eatin' his hash up to the saloon, a-lookin' at the gal with a peculiar look on that graveyard face of his'. By hookey! Jinnie's struck a 'lead,' if she's got the Judge onto a string. 'Pay dirt,' by thunder! Guess the old cuss will 'pan out,' well!"

"Oh, pretty Jemima, don't say no, and we will marry be."

I don't believe though that Jinnie will cotton to that old cuss, nuthow you can fix it."

By the time that Bill had come to this conclusion, he had arrived at the saloon. Entering it, he found Jinnie, busy as a bee, as usual.

"Box for you down at the express office," Bill said, in his abrupt way.

"Why didn't you bring it up?" Jinnie asked.

"The old cuss, Judge Jones, objected; said you had better come down and see about it yourself. He wants to see you 'bout something. Say, Jinnie, I reckon you've struck the old cuss for all he's worth;

"Den I was gone; clean gone!"

"Nonsense! Bill, you're always joking; but, does the Judge really want to see me?" she asked.

"That's his platform and no beefsteak! But, say, Jinnie, don't you throw yourself away on an old cuss like the Judge, when Gigner is around;"

"For you'd make me just as happy as a big sunflower!"

"I'll go and see what he wants."

So Jimmie caught up her straw hat, which lay behind the bar, and left the saloon.

With a light step, she hastened down the street toward the express office.

An earnest look was upon her face as she walked onward. The words of the jocose stage-driver had put strange thoughts into her head.

Many odd circumstances connected with Judge Jones' manner toward her came into her mind. She remembered how, once or twice, when the Judge was seated in the saloon eating his meals—the Judge took his meals at the Eldorado and slept in the express office—she had caught his eyes fixed upon her with a peculiar expression shining in them. She had not thought much of it at the time, but now, she began to ask herself if Bill had guessed the truth.

Entering the express office, she found the Judge alone, busy among his papers.

"Bill told me that a box has come for me," Jinnie said.

"Yes; there it is; charges, one dollar."

Jinnie handed over the amount and signed the receipt.

"I'll have it sent up to the hotel right away," the Judge said, a kind expression in his usually harsh voice. "Sit down, Miss Jinnie. I want to talk to you for a little while." He brought a chair as he spoke and placed it by the girl's side.

Jinnie sat down and waited in silence. The Judge brought another chair for himself and sat down facing Jinnie.

For a moment the Judge looked earnestly in the fresh young face of the girl, a strange expression upon his grave features, then he spoke:

"Miss Jinnie, do you know that the life that you are leading is a very strange one for a young girl?"

"Yes, I know it," Jinnie said, quietly.

"You are constantly brought in contact with the very worst class that frequents our town—rough, uncouth miners—you can not be helping lead such a life."

"I must get my living some way; I have no one to look out for me," Jinnie said, replied, earnestly. "I know that the miners are rough, but you forget Judge that I was brought up among them; by this time I ought to be pretty well used to them and to their ways."

"Jinnie, what ever put it into your head to take the Eldorado?" the Judge asked, suddenly.

"I don't know; I suppose because it was the only thing I could do here. I work hard, and I'm doing well, and there isn't any one in Spur City that can truthfully say a word against me." The girl held up her head proudly as she spoke.

"That's true."

"Yes; after father died, I didn't have five dollars in the world. I was all alone, helpless, almost friendless. I sat in the little cabin down by the Rees after the funeral, crying for father, for he had always been a good father to me; I felt as if there wasn't anybody on earth that cared anything for me. I had a good mind to go out and jump into the river and die there, where father had died. Then somebody came in to see me. He didn't say much, but what he did say dried my tears right up, and made me know that father had spoken truth when he said, after he passed in his checks, there was somebody up in the sky overhead that would look after me. I never was learned to pray, Judge, but, just then, I did pray, not with my lips, but way down in my heart."

"This friend that came to see you offered you assistance, then?" the Judge questioned, a peculiar look in his stern eyes.

"Yes, he did; but he wasn't what you call a regular friend; I had never seen him but once before. He told me that the Rees had taken one father from me but had given me another, and he was the other."

"Why, I don't understand how that could be," said the Judge, puzzled at the words.

"It was true, but I would rather not speak any more about that, if you please," Jinnie replied, a little embarrassed.

"Just as you please; but go on with your story; I am very much interested."

"Then he told me that he intended to look out for me until I was able to take care of myself, and he asked me what I thought I would like to do. You've seen the lightning flash, Judge, haven't you, in a thunder storm?"

The Judge nodded assent.

"Well, just as quick as that, the thought came into my mind to take the Eldorado. When I told him of it, he looked grave, but, after thinking for a moment, he asked me if I thought I could run it. I told him I thought I could, and that settled the matter. I took the hotel, and you know the rest, Judge, as well as I do."

"Yes; I think I can guess who aided you?"

"I don't want you to, Judge!" cried Jinnie, earnestly.

CHAPTER XII.

JUDGE JONES' QUESTION.

JUDGE JONES cast a long and steady glance into the face of the girl. "It was evident that he was not pleased with her speech.

"You do not wish me, then, to guess who your friend is?" he said.

Jinnie replied by a single movement of the head.

"Do you know that I take a great interest in you, my girl?" the Judge asked, a strange hesitation evident in his speech.

"I'm sure, I'm very much obliged, Judge," Jinnie said, honestly.

"It pains me to see you leading the life that you do; something tells me to extend a hand, and try to lift you from it. Are you willing to be aided by me?"

For a moment Jinnie's gaze sought the floor. In the eyes of the Judge she read the full meaning of his words.

"You do not answer," he said, after waiting for a moment.

"I am very much obliged to you, Judge, but I am getting along very well now," she replied, slowly. "If I should need a friend, why I'll remember what you've just said."

The Judge started to his feet and paced up and down the room for a few moments, his brow contracted in thought. Suddenly he halted, facing the girl, and extended his hands.

"Give me your hands, Jinnie," he said, in a tone that betrayed traces of deep agitation.

Astonished at the request, the girl placed her little brown hands in the broad palms of the stalwart man.

Quickly, with a feverish haste, the fingers of the Judge closed around the little hands. He raised her from the chair to her feet and gazed with an earnest look, into her face.

"Jinnie, do you love any one?" he questioned.

For a moment the face of the girl flushed crimson at the question. She strove to withdraw her hands from his, but he held her fast as by a grip of iron.

"You do not answer my question?" he cried, his lips trembling with a strange excitement.

"You have no right to ask it," Jinnie said, slowly, avoiding the earnest gaze of the Judge.

"Perhaps not—perhaps not!" he exclaimed, slowly; "still, I do ask it. Will you reply?"

"No."

The answer of the girl was low but firm; no trace of hesitation in her voice.

The brows of the Judge contracted at her words.

"Then, if there is a man in Spur City who loves you—a man rich, holding a good position in the world, esteemed by his fellows—if there is such a man, and he should come to you and say: 'I love you; will you let me take you from the unwomanly life that you are leading and place you before the world, the wife of a wealthy man?' what would be your answer?"

"No?"

Firmly and promptly the answer came.

"You will not change your mind?"

"No."

For a single moment the Judge gazed into the earnest face of the girl; then he released her hands and turned away; walking to the other side of the room, he sat down in a chair, and placing his elbow upon the table near him, half hid his face in his hand.

Jinnie stood irresolute, not knowing whether to go or stay. The strange manner of the Judge surprised her.

"Do you wish to say anything more?" she said, timidly.

"No; I will have the box sent up," he replied, in a strange, unnatural tone.

With a puzzled look upon her face, Jinnie left the express office.

The Judge remained for a few moments motionless, a dark look upon his massive face.

Then he rose to his feet and began pacing, with a rapid step, up and down the narrow width of the room.

"Pray that his words may be true, little one—for then you can be my wife," were Old Bull's-Eye's words, as he drew the maiden to his side again, his strong arm holding her firmly and tenderly.

"Father," said Luis, who was supporting the wounded man's head, "you must not try to speak now—you are killing yourself—wait until a more favorable moment."

"No, my boy—for you, at least, are my son—no; I must speak out while I can. I can feel the blood creeping up—soon 'twill suffocate me. Nay, don't weep—be a man. I am not afraid to die—it is but a long, dreamless sleep, after all! Nothing—nothing more!"

His speech was interrupted by a violent fit of coughing, which was ended by ejecting a quantity of blood. He smiled faintly as the spasm subsided. He knew as well as they that his hours were numbered, and motioned aside the proffered water.

"Give me brandy—whisky—anything that will sustain me while I can clear my conscience," he gasped, and fairly drained a leather flask of fiery liquor.

His confession, if such it may be termed, was a long one, interrupted by frequent spasms, during each of which it seemed as though death must come to his relief, but by plentiful use of liquor, he would as often rally and continue his statement. Naturally there was much repetition and irrelevant matter, and the reader would be worried were his words literally recorded. The substance will suffice for a proper understanding of what may yet be clouded.

Antone Barillo and Dolores Ventura had been engaged to each other nearly a year before Abel Vermillye made his appearance, and Vicente Ventura saw that his only hope of averting utter ruin, lay in weding his daughter to Abel, and so forbade Barillo the house, forcing his daughter to smile upon the rich young planter. He was a stern man, and Dolores had always been accustomed to bow to his will. She did so in this case, and told Barillo that they must part forever. He finally accepted this fiat, and left the country. Dolores married Vermillye, though hating him with all her fiery, intense nature, until little Anita—or Esther, as Abel called her then—came to make peace between husband and wife. Twas at this time that Barillo, unable longer to fight

"Perhaps he's up in the Gully."

"The Gully?"

"Yes, Gopher Gully; it's about two miles up the valley. Follow the river till you come to where a little creek runs into it; then turn to your right; the camp is only about a hundred yards or so from the river."

"You think that I will be likely to find him there?"

"I don't know anything about it," replied Jinnie, with a shake of the head. "But he's just as likely to be there as anywhere else."

"And just as likely not to be there, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"Ah!" Rennet came to the speedy conclusion that he hadn't obtained much information.

Jinnie went on her way toward the saloon, leaving the old lawyer in a rather puzzled state of mind.

"Bless me! I wonder why she was so anxious to know if Bernice wanted to be with this young man?" muttered the lawyer. "I suppose that I may as well go back to the hotel, and tell Bernice that I can't find the young man. I don't think it will be of any use for me to travel two miles up this valley, over the rocks and through the mud. It's ten chances to one that I shall only have my labor for my pains."

So, having come to this determination, Rennet returned to the hotel. He went at once to Bernice's room. He found the young girl gazing out of the window.

Bernice turned eagerly as the old lawyer entered the room.

"Well?" she questioned, in haste, almost before he had entered the apartment.

"I haven't been able to find him," Rennet said, understanding what she wished to know.

"Oh, that's too bad!" exclaimed Bernice, pettishly.

"But Chiquita—your wife, I mean—declared that you were my child," said Carmela, hesitatingly.

It was late at night, but none of those in whom we have been more immediately interested, could compose themselves to sleep after the exciting events, and Old Bull's-Eye had drawn Carmela aside from the rest.

"She did, I know, at first, and I thought that was what she meant just before she died, when she said—*'there is your child'*?" But you and Anita were together—I believe now that it was Anita she meant, not you. Then there is her treatment of you—you told me you did not believe she was your mother. Barillo seemed sincere in his confession, and he swore that Anita was my child. I believe he was telling the truth. My heart told me from the first that you could not be my ch.—i—my love for you is far different."

"Then I—I only find a father, to lose him," half laughed Carmela. "I am nobody, then, half the girl, breathing quickly."

"I believe, before God, that you are my daughter!" said the old woman, a deep, emotional tone, as Walter Dugrand came forward. "I have no proof save what I find in my heart, but, Carmela, if you will, there is a home and a father's love awaiting you—will you accept it?"

"You hear what he says, little one? I believe he is your father. If you think so, perhaps his is the best right—"

"Do you want me to go with him?" exclaimed the girl, breathing quickly.

"No—I don't—I can't say that! You promised to be mine—my wife!"

The party passed the desert in safety, and thus reached Santa Fe. There occurred a double wedding, solemnized by Father Ignacio, the very priest who had inadvertently put Old Bull's-Eye upon the right trail. And, learning what had occurred, he settled all doubts by declaring that Anita was indeed the child of Dolores Vermillye. He had long been a friend of Antone Barillo, and had, in fact, advised him to take the child with him in his flight, for Dolores was not a proper guardian. Thus, all doubts

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The Arm-Chair.

Now that the season of Lent is over the gayeties of the Easter season follow. "Balls and routs" are again in order. This brings anxious parents or over scrupulous guardians of the public morals to the front to declare against dancing, and the question of "the light fantastic toe" is now having its biannual ventilation not only in the domestic circle, and through the religious press, but—as a letter before us shows—even within the precincts of well-regulated society. This letter, advertizing to the abuses of time, declares against all time and money spent in learning to dance and asks an opinion on the point raised—if a substitute for recreation cannot be devised which will set aside the frivolous dance for something ennobling.

Human nature is the same to-day as when Miriam sung her song and performed a dance over Pharaoh's destruction. The dance is a species of enjoyment, common to all nations and all times. It can have no substitute any more than grace, or summer, or joy, or exhilarant motion can have a substitute. It is, in fact, a form of expression which no more can be or ought to be suppressed than the instinct which leads us toward light. Efforts at suppression are made under mistaken sense of duty, but how futile they are let the history of human society answer. If, for a time, such efforts do succeed, what follows? A condition which produced the Puritan blue laws and made Cotton Mather a terrible reality—which, in the family, induces severe discipline, and in society implies an absence of geniality and grace.

What is the main point to be considered, it seems to us, is so to regulate the dance that it shall not become a dissipation, and that it shall not make any infraction of the rules of propriety or modesty in its forms. The quadrille, the lancers, the contra-dance, all are very charming forms, wherein grace, gallantry and good-nature are exercised to their utmost; while the round-dance and the German are only permissible under the most restricted auspices, since they demand a personal contact which is an enemy of modesty, unless the partners are intimates of right. To set aside the quadrille because the waltz is questionable is like shooting all the birds because the crow is a nuisance. Don't shoot the birds and don't say no to the young folks when they make a reasonable request for a dance.

Sunshine Papers.

Practical Jokes.

FOURTEENTH STREET, directly opposite Union Square, on a chilly spring day. The throng of hurrying pedestrians, passing to and fro, have ceased their promenade and are waiting—a skyward-glancing crowd. There is man—man from him of three-score years and ten, in fur-trimmed winter wraps, and him of newly attained majority, in light spring overcoat, to him of trifling size, pretty frills, and kilted skirts. Women, young and old, are there, with suggestions of winter and spring in their light silks, lace scarfs, flower-wreathed hats and furs. On some steps is a group of flower-girls—not the idealistic ones of poetry, but the realistic ones of Broadway—with tattered garments, dirty hands and faces, and old shawls protecting their thin forms from the rough wind, from which the March sun has kissed the frost, but which has still a reminder of snow-banks in it. They are laughing merrily. A few paces from them stands a salesman of toy balloons—the red mass attached to his stick dancing wildly with the breeze, while he, too, with boisterous laugh, looks skyward. Skyward, where—against a blue arch, dusted here and there, with patches of dun-colored clouds, shading off to soft, white, feathered edges, and rifted toward the northward with streaks of gold—a mass—red, light, dancing—of balloons is sailing away, away, away!

We, too, lingered a moment, watching the truant toys, and wondering whether pity was needed in the case. Feeling irritated by the unsympathetic mirth of the flower-girls, then, angered by the selfishness of the salesman who, holding his own balloons safe in his hand, had only a mocking, pitiless laugh for that one of his own fraternity who might at that moment be regretting their loss, we walked on. Walked on—thinking of a like scene we had witnessed once before.

A scene like this: a sad-eyed, patient-faced salesman of toy balloons walked slowly up the great city's great thoroughfare. Close behind him sauntered two young men—stylish, rollicking, reckless. With sudden, wanton impulse, one of them drew a penknife from his pocket, and swiftly severed the cord that held the floating mass—they walked unconcernedly on, to a little distance, and stood carelessly and mischievously watching the man's look of surprise, dismay, and trouble.

Was the injured man left unrequited for the loss he suffered at the hands of a reckless practical joker? No. The young dandy had gentlemanliness enough to more than defray the cost of the property which he had wantonly destroyed.

Yet I wondered then, I have wondered often since, whether that bill was in any degree a sufficient reparation of the cruelty—momentarily of the act; its unwarrantable recklessness; the few minutes of fear, of doubt, of harassed care, that may have been imposed upon the victim of this fun. It seems to me not.

The act was a breach of the golden rule, a breach of true politeness; it had in it a savor of wantonness that was suggestive of Vandalism, of cruelty that, fostered, might grow to equal Nero's. It was the same spirit that prompted the salesman on Union Square to laugh when he witnessed another's misfortune—a spirit that rejoices in other's terror and trouble.

Most practical jokes are cruel—sometimes severely so; and a practical joker is rarely, if ever, a true gentleman. True gentlemanliness

demands a thoughtful consideration for the feelings of others, a kind attention to their comfort, a sympathetic regard for their pleasure or sorrow. True gentlemanliness has no savor of cruelty, admits of no acts of thoughtless injury, no deeds of wantonness; it is kind, considerate, courteous, helpful, charitable.

Practical joking, on the contrary, is selfish, cruel, and begets a spirit of fiendish delight in the witnessing of the sufferings of others.

The dandy who severed the balloons was dressed as a gentleman, acted like a boor; and, as deeds, not dress, make the man, and thoughtlessness is never an excuse for unkindness, he sinks to a level as low, perhaps lower, than the man whom he considered a lawful subject for his joke.

Young man—you who aim to gain the perfection of polite and noble manhood—to the selfishness and cruelty of practical jokes, say—away, away, away!

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

BE ACREEABLE.

"MAKE YOURSELF agreeable to every one." I know that seems a hard precept to carry into practice. If we can not please *every* one, is that any reason for us not to *try* to see how many we *can* please? A cheerful disposition will go a great way toward rendering one's self desirable companion. A merry heart will carry sunshine into many a dark and desolate home. A kind act done willingly, and not grudgingly, will help many in need of aid.

When we go visiting those who are poor and need our help, I don't believe in putting on a doleful face and talking about resignation, and making them have the dumps ten times worse. I believe in helping to mend their clothes and tidy up their place a bit, for I don't believe that poor folks love dirt any better than the rich do, and they don't have so much time to attend to these household duties. You'll find more of a welcome if you bring food than if you deluged them with tracts. It isn't so hard to preach about bearing one's burdens bravely and submitting to a higher power, after we have just risen from a hearty dinner, but it's not so easy to listen to it on an empty stomach, and I wouldn't blame any one for yawning and going to sleep over such a homily.

We often leave off endeavoring to be agreeable because we think we can do so little in that way that it isn't worth while trying. That's folly. You'll just be as agreeable if you wound some yarn, darned up somebody's "footings," or rocked the cradle for some tired, weary mother. If we were to neglect these trifles how little there would be done in this world!

Why cannot storekeepers be more agreeable to those they employ? If I were dependent on this sort of work for a living, I'd want to feel that I had a friend in my employer, and not that he only thought as much of me as he did one of his signs. I grant you that these storekeepers are agreeable to their customers, because it is to their interest to be so; they are extremely urgent they—the customers—should their women help to stand long and weary hours behind counters, and do not allow them to sit at all during work-hours. Such task-masters cannot be agreeable personages, and their society is not such as I would wish to to go to sleep over such a homily.

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We often leave off endeavoring to be agreeable because we think we can do so little in that way that it isn't worth while trying. That's folly. You'll just be as agreeable if you wound some yarn, darned up somebody's "footings," or rocked the cradle for some tired, weary mother.

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Why cannot storekeepers be more agreeable to those they employ? If I were dependent on this sort of work for a living

"WORSTED."

BY FRANK H. CONVERSE.

A tangle of worsted of manifold hue—
An ivory needle—a dimple or two,
White, swift-flying fingers, a pair of soft eyes,
Where shyly, half-hidden, a wealth of love lies—
Make up the sweet picture before me to-day
That is framed in a window—"just over the way."

If the work of her fingers—the loop and the thread—
And the fancies inwoven with them, could be read—
As plainly as can be the arch glances sweet,
She gives me at times from her side of the street,
I should wish my heart pulses tell them they might be—
The thought, that one loves me—"just over the way."

In the meshes inwoven with consummate art,
Unconscious—she's netted small bits of my heart,
And could she but weave with her worsteds so fine
Some picture to show this devotion of mine,
She would blushingly see in the finished crochet
My love for the maiden "just over the way."

Ah, well! It is over, that dream of my heart,
And my love like the dream must as quickly depart,
For the mind of the maid, and the fruits of her
knitting,

Resulted in giving—yours truly—the mitten.
My heart hath no choice, but to sadly obey
The behest of the maiden "just over the way."

The Terrible Truth:
or,
THE THORNHURST MYSTERY.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,
AUTHOR OF "STRANGELY WED," "THE FALSE
WIDOW," "ADRAL, THE ADOPTED," "CO-
RAL AND RUEY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

"FROM THIS HOUR I HAVE NO SON!"

MR. OWEN DARE leaned back in his chair, his toes upon the fender; his eyes very thoughtful and compassionate in expression fixed upon his companion. It was near the close of a lowering, gray, early December day, the same which had witnessed the blast of the preceding chapter. A sea coal fire burned cheerily in the grate, casting a red glow over the two silent, motionless forms. It was a comfortable situation, and one Dare was prepared to thoroughly enjoy for all the tender concern so aptly pictured in his countenance.

Opposite, stretched at length upon a lounge, his head upon his arm and moody face turned fixedly toward the fire, lay Vane Vivian. Dare had found him there, half an hour before, had addressed a few remarks to him, eliciting into the silence which suited best the other's mood. He was the first to stir at last, after waiting vainly for some recognition of the sympathy he had endeavored mutely to express.

"Something has been going amiss, Vane. What is it?" I haven't seen you look so downcast for a month, and, 'pon honor, that dolorous visage is a more suggestive than agreeable sight. What's gone wrong, my dear fellow?

Vane moved and flung himself upon his elbow sullenly.

"Don't pretend to be a guy, Dare! You know well as I do that people have been saying for the last three years I have gone wrong, and there isn't a doubt about people being in the right of it. The devil of it is, they're ready enough to drive a fellow all wrong, but never willing to help right him again. It's the proper sort of retribution, of course, and I for one shall never grumble, take it as a dispensation and all that. Fit subject for the morality of the lesson, am I not?"

"Not in that bitter mood I am afraid." He spoke seriously, putting aside the other's sneering infliction by his gravity.

"Don't you begin to lecture a reform," said Vane, testily. "You asked what was amiss, I believe. Only that I've got into a fix so tight that I can't by any possibility get out again. The colonel has given me my walking papers, or as good, and I may as well be set adrift first as last."

"My dear Vane, don't let yourself grow despondent. The colonel is never as implacable as he appears. He will be the first to make up this quarrel, if it has been a quarrel, mark my words!"

"I know his peculiarities far better than you can, and I tell you he will never see me through this scrape as he has done with others. I have nothing to say against him, mind; the sooner he is well rid of such an unworthy representative the better, and I wouldn't ask him for help now if a word would bring it."

Dare looked at him keenly.

"You don't censure him, but very evidently there is some one you do censure. You are not dealing frankly with me; you have kept something back. My own ability to give you aid is very limited; but, my dear fellow, there is no one who will devote himself more faithfully to your cause. Is that haughty pride going to hold me off at arm's length, Vane?" There was mournful reproach and a sense of evil in Mr. Dare's tone.

"I think you can scarcely help knowing what has been kept back, Dare. You've been so thick with the colonel and at the house that you were probably taken into confidence. It was hardly friendly not to have given me a warning."

"Now, by George! you are absolutely unkind. I haven't the least intimation of what you intend to convey."

"Didn't you know anything of this plot the colonel has been concocting, his pet scheme of marrying me to his ward, who has ousted me from his affections it appears? You were in love with her once. I remember, as much in love as you are ever apt to get, so I don't expect any sympathy in telling you I have refused her and with her Thornhurst and all its belongings."

"I suspected something of this sort, Vane; I could not help seeing how Miss Carteret has managed to work herself into your father's good graces. My surprise is that she has succeeded so well and so quickly in her cunning game."

Vane's eyes left the fire to rest for a moment upon Dare, in cold questioning.

"You appear to have misunderstood me. I mentioned it as the colonel's scheme. I absolve Miss Carteret from any active share in it. It is simply a plan to reform and domesticate me to the approved state of the animal, man, but I have an objection to being disposed of in that way, unfortunately. I don't deny being cut up a trifle in regard to the result. I am not quite reconciled to being swept out of my place so unceremoniously, but in the abstract it is precisely what I deserve as I have taken occasion to remark."

"A moment ago you 'found no fault' with the colonel; now you 'absolve Miss Carteret,' and it is very clearly evident that cause for censure lies between them. I can look at the affair with more impartial, more just eyes than you, my dear boy. I tell you I suspected it before. A man in that young lady's position would be called a fortune-hunter; almost any other woman an adventress; but it is best

for you to see the matter leniently as you can."

"Upon my word, I supposed you would be ready to jump at the merest chance of getting her, and here you are traducing her until I'm obliged to speak in her favor."

"I have admired Miss Carteret, Vane. She is no worse in her sphere than I have been in mine. We are both poverty's favorites, and she is not so much to be blamed for aspiring to Thornhurst. You'll never know, until you have been there, the misery of knowing yourself habitually hard-up."

"I'm apt to find it out soon enough. And there is a difference between this case and yours, supposing of course you allude to your interest in the Ferguson-Hayes affair. The gushing Augusta flung herself and her eighty thousand fairly enough at your head. I am not so liberal as to care nothing for the threatened loss of my inheritance, but I am worse hurt at finding myself supplanted in my father's heart. I have been lying here all afternoon looking my own situation in the face, and I was concluded. She had extorted an unwilling promise from him that he would make friends again with Vane. Misgivings as to the perfect wisdom of his own course had crept into his mind during the day. He meant what he had said in the main. He'd be hanged if he'd retract from a single condition Vane should marry Nora, provided Nora would take him, of which he was by no means so sure, or he should never set foot upon Thornhurst as presumptive heir. But it had been the worst of policy, he must admit that, to come to an open outbreak with his son. Nora was right so far; he would make up with Vane, recall him to the house again, and trust affairs to come right in the end. Get the boy's anger out—pure Vivian temper he had, and worse than Vivian obstinacy—and Lucifer himself could not be expected to foresee what lengths he might take."

Owen was relapsing back to his first morbid indifference. The hard thoughts which were keeping him company had brought visible lines into the darkly moody face. A desperate man, without hope, that was what Dare saw in him and his treacherous heart thrilled exultingly. "I have been talking of this freely to you, Owen," said Vane, in something of his old frank, affectionate manner, "more freely than I am apt to ever speak of it again. I haven't mapped out any course for myself yet; but I am strengthening myself in a good resolution never to touch the dice again. I'd vow it by all that's sacred at this minute if I were out of the clutches of the Shylocks. I'm nearly determined as it is to make a turning point if I only knew how to get the brakes down to the requisite notch."

"You'll come out right yet, my dear fellow. Don't despond just now; the colonel is sure to relent, however hard he may seem, and his ward is tolerably sure to over-reach herself if she counts on his rash threat of to-day. Take my word for it, Colonel Vivian will repent his harshness and be ready to retract in less than three days. Rose up and dress for the evening, Vane. Stir yourself out of this dolorous mood. Suppose we go around to Niblo's for another sight of the Black Crook; new features in the spectacle, I believe. What's this—Madeira? oh, brandy. As a general thing I wouldn't advise it, but you'll be the better for some stimulus just now."

He had turned to a little stand where a smoke-colored bottle stood, untouched, with glasses beside it. Vane watched him fill one to the brim, and tossed it off when it was offered him with the recklessness which had carried him into excesses often before this. Shadows were creeping thick into the room. Dare applied a match to the gas, and came back to his seat before the fire.

"Shall it be Niblo's?" he asked. "Or have you something better to propose?" "That as well as anything. I was about to decline going out, but I have reconsidered. If Sir Rupert were in town now, I'd not be at any loss how to spend the evening."

"Thanks to my patron saint that Sir Rupert is a hundred miles away," thought Dare. "The young idiot would have confided in him rather than me, but for that."

Some hours later they strolled out from Niblo's, arm-in-arm. The evening was not half over, but they had seen the "spectacle" perhaps a dozen times before this, and Vane was too restless to remain quiet long.

"I think I shall go to my room and to bed," he said, as they stepped upon the pavement. "I've managed to work myself into a small fever this afternoon. No, don't call a carriage unless you object to walking yourself."

Dare did not object. They both lit cigars, and the keen wintry air of the streets changed Vane's inclination.

"It's too early to go home yet," he decided. "Suppose we go in here for a moment?"

Dare glanced up at the front of the tall building, which was not lighted, and drew back.

"I hadn't the slightest intention of coming this way," he said, hurriedly. "You had better not, Vane. I've been revolving the question of your difficulties while we were walking here. If you can bring yourself to do it, my boy, why not accept the colonel's terms? It is not too late yet, and in that case it will certainly be better to cut such places as this from the very first. Think, Vane."

"Preserve me from ever thinking, if it leads me to that," he broke out, irritably.

"You're a prince of good fellows, Dare. You have never once said, 'I told you so,' since I've got to the bottom of the pit, and no one else ever warned more faithfully than you. I tell you I wouldn't save Thornhurst to myself in that way if a thousand times more depended upon it. I'm going in to try my luck once more, and no matter what the result may be, I swear off against the vice forever after. I can't be any worse cornered, and there's a chance of winning enough to stave along till I've some plan ahead."

Nothing in life worth living for better than his cigars, his wines, his pleasures of the day, Vane Vivian had thought, and here he was hanging his hopes on such a feverish chance as has snapp'd many a life before now. Youthful vitality is never quite hopeless, never quite willing to give up the struggle, however misdirected its effort may be.

Dare followed him in through dim passages, where their footfalls were lost in the thick pile of rich carpetings, up some broad, shallow steps, and into a saloon where the burst of sudden light was dazzling in its brilliancy, a lofty, frescoed, panelled room, with a few persons loitering there. There were marble tables scattered about, and a sideboard loaded with glittering silver, where wines ruby and amber sparkled in crystal flagons. Vane approached and helped himself liberally; afterward the two young men passed through into an adjoining room, and here for the first time the true character of the place became apparent.

A silence, broken by the sharp rattle of dice, the monotonous repetition of numbers from the near vicinity of a bazaïre door, behind which a faro-bank was located, reigned here. Vane remained in the background while Vane approached one of the tables and flung himself into a vacant place. A player opposite glanced up and nodded.

"Going to take your revenge to-night, Mr. Vivian?"

"Either that, or your friend Moses may mark me off his books as a dead letter."

The other laughed one of those cold-blooded, chilling laughs which should belong to a vampire rather than a man.

"My friend Moses seldom does business in that way," he answered, carelessly. "Young gentlemen of your ilk don't run the risk of imprisonment for obtaining money on false pretences. My friend Moses is not apt to lose through you, Mr. Vivian."

"He's safe until midnight," thought Dare, from his place near the entrance. "You are in a tight fix, you confiding simpleton, but if you don't find yourself in a tighter one within the next two hours, there will be one more obliged man than yourself."

Colonel Vivian had just come in from the street, and was divesting himself of his great coat in the hall, when the bell jingled again, and he turned sharply to himself open the door through which the servant had admitted him a moment before.

"You, Dare," he said, with a breath of relief. "I've just come from your quarters, from Van's rasher. Where is the rascal now? They told me there you had both gone out for the evening. Great heavens, man, what is the matter?"

He had caught sight of Dare's face in the glare of the hall light, and a great thrill of dread shot to his heart lest something terrible had befallen Vane. Nora had had her own way before their interview of the morning was concluded. She had extorted an unwilling promise from him that he would make friends again with Vane. Misgivings as to the perfect wisdom of his own course had crept into his mind during the day. He meant what he had said in the main. He'd be hanged if he'd retract from a single condition Vane should marry Nora, provided Nora would take him, of which he was by no means so sure, or he should never set foot upon Thornhurst as presumptive heir. But it had been the worst of policy, he must admit that, to come to an open outbreak with his son. Nora was right so far. He would make up with Vane, recall him to the house again, and trust affairs to come right in the end. Get the boy's anger out—pure Vivian temper he had, and worse than Vivian obstinacy—and Lucifer himself could not be expected to foresee what lengths he might take."

"This young man has spoken the truth if he ever did in his life. If you have claims on him, take them out of him the best way you can. I swear not one penny shall be extorted from me to save him from perdition!" From this hour, I have no son! Not one tithe of all I own shall ever go to him; he is no more to me than the merest beggar in the streets."

Vane wheeled, and for one instant saw the colonel's face, unchanged in its rigid pallor, in the strange, quiet sternness come upon it.

For one instant, then the colonel turned and walked away without even vouchsafing him a glance.

"A dizzy blindness rushed over him; a sea of red fire swam before his eyes; he raised his arm with uncertain motion. Dare, who had pressed to his side, knocked up his hand, and a bullet shivered a ground-glass shade over their heads.

"Not that yet, my friend," said Dare, coolly, possessing himself of the pistol which fell from Vane's unnerved fingers.

Neither you nor your friend Moses are likely ever to see the color of your money."

The sarcastic laugh of the latter was cut short by a voice, deep, stern, changed almost from recognition to the familiar ears it fell upon.

"This young man has spoken the truth if he ever did in his life. If you have claims on him, take them out of him the best way you can. I swear not one penny shall be extorted from me to save him from perdition!" From this hour, I have no son! Not one tithe of all I own shall ever go to him; he is no more to me than the merest beggar in the streets."

"You mean to convey the worst by that. I ask, I command you, by all the regard you have ever expressed for me, to tell me the truth."

How inexplicably fair she looked, in his eyes, as she stood there, giving utterance to her command so imperiously! She was plainly attired in a morning-dress of silver gray, with linen bands at her throat and wrists, with the bright hair loosely coiled about the shapeless head, and he had never watched her with such pressure, gloating eyes.

"If Miss Carteret commands her most faithful servant has nothing left but to obey." Something under his servile manner, which seemed to her fine perceptions insulting, something linking himself with her, brought the hot blood tingling to her cheeks, but she was too thoroughly in earnest to swerve from her purpose now. "He has been gambling, but that is no news to you. He has involved himself over head and ears in debt, with not the slightest chance of getting out, now that the colonel has broken with him—broken for good, I very much fear."

"That is not all," said Nora, as he paused. "I knew all that before. Go on, Mr. Dare."

"That is not all, unfortunately. Do you know what a post-obit is, Miss Carteret? I see you do. Well, it appears that Vane has been raising money to clear himself of gambling debts by a post-obit. The colonel discovered it by chance last night, and he has renounced his son, he swears forever! I really think he means it more earnestly than he ever meant any thing in his life before. It was a cruel cut, after all his leniency to Vane."

"I don't believe it," she said, her clear eyes looking him through, and he bore their scrutiny unflinchingly.

"It is true, nevertheless. Judge for yourself of his desperation when I tell you that he tried to shoot himself after they had met in a gambling-den, where, with his customary recklessness, he had been adding to the burdens he already bore. Tried to shoot himself, and probably would have succeeded but for me. That is one debt of gratitude I may expect to claim from you, Miss Carteret."

"I think that the truth were told it is more than counterbalanced. How did Colonel Vivian come to be in such a place? He is not in the habit of frequenting gambling dens. You took him there, Owen Dare, just as you have managed all the bitter misunderstanding between them, I do believe."

"You are plain-spoken and not chaitable, Miss Carteret. The time will come when you will give me greater credit."

"It will if you deserve it, without a doubt."

"You seem to hate me, Nora; and I—I don't merit your hate. I would sacrifice my life, if needful, to your happiness."

"A much less sacrifice will suffice for that, so far as you are concerned—the sacrifice of these attentions which you persist in forcing upon me. You must know how distasteful they are to me."

"No temptation could induce me to give up all hope in that way, Nora. While there is life there is hope, and it must be so with me."

She cut the interview short after that. She had liked him from the first; once when she had almost persuaded herself he had cause she had not quite overcome that liking, and now that he was in trouble, when others were turning against him, she was his friend, true and firm. She felt that this man was his enemy, and her own dislike of him multiplied accordingly. However true or false his story might be, he had made the breach between Colonel Vivian and his son.

"If Sir Rupert were only here," thought Nora, wistfully, "he could discover the truth and do more than anyone else."

It was five long days before Sir Rupert's return. Five long days of suspense, during which things visible were scarcely changed. The pleasures of the day and night went on the same. The only change at the up-town mansion was that Vane no longer came there, and his name had been dropped as if with one accord by its inmates. No one seemed to care for him, except his wife, always with one exception—Nora. And even she was forced to respect Colonel Vivian's mandate that the subject should be dropped from discussion.

dark path he was traversing, who can tell how much of the still darker future might have been spared?

Sir Rupert, looking down upon her, thought that womanly faith had never taken a more beautiful form.

"If he is not yet saved and prove to you that he is worthy of your trust, it will be because no earthly power will avail," he said, earnestly. "Don't fear but he shall be saved, Miss Carteret."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 262.)

The Rival Brothers. OR, THE WRONGED WIFE'S HATE.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,
AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AWFUL
MYSTERY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

A MOONLIGHT INTERVIEW.

LONG lances of moonlight streaming through the vast window, mingled with the light of two wax candles, and fell on the pale face of Eve Hazelwood, as she sat in an easy-chair, having her wounded forehead bound with long strips of court-plaster.

On two pale faces, for Una Forest was the surgeon, and her blue eyes were full of tender solicitude, as they rested on the colorless face of her patient.

"How pale you look, my dear!" her soft voice was pityingly saying. "I am sure your poor bruised forehead must be very painful."

Eve laughed good-naturedly.

"Oh, no. It is not very painful; it only feels a little stiff and sore. Don't look shocking with all this plaster! Why could not I have bruised my arm or my head instead of my face, I wonder?"

"My love, you have reason to be thankful it was not your neck you broke! What would Monsieur D'Arville have done then?"

Eve blushed, as only sixteen years ever does, at the allusion. What a happy ride it had been for her, in spite of her cut face!

"And that reminds me," Miss Forest placidly went on, noting the telltale blush, "that you had better keep your room this evening, if you don't want to disentangle him. Of course, our Eve must be pretty at all times, but I can assure her she is a great deal prettier without strips of court plaster."

Eve glanced at herself in the mirror, and fully concurred in the opinion.

"It's too bad, but I suppose there is no help for it! My head feels a little dizzy and confused, too; and I think, on the whole, the best thing I can do is to go to bed."

"Exactly, my dear! You will feel all right to-morrow morning, and your roses will have returned in full bloom. Now I shall fetch you some tea and toast and see you safely tucked in. Hazel must not disturb you to-night—she will make you ill and feverish with her little-tattle, and must keep her own room."

"How kind she is, after all!" thought Eve, as the little Albino tripped away, "and how Hazel and I have misjudged her! I feel as if I could go down into the valley of humiliation and beg her pardon on my knees for rash judgment. Oh, what a night it is! and how happy I am! I wonder what he is doing down-stairs! I wonder if he will miss me this evening!"

Alone as she was, she felt her face glowing, and covered it with her hands, with a little laugh at her own silliness. A soft rustling of silk made her look up. Miss Forest was there again, carrying a tray herself, laden with tea and toast, and marmalade.

"Now, my dear, take something before you retire, it will make you feel all the better to-morrow."

"How good you are, Miss Forest!" Eve cried out in the fullness of her heart, "to take all this trouble for me!"

Oh, Una Forest! little white hypocrite! had you ever in all your life been guilty of a blush, it should have been then! But the pale blue eyes only shifted away under the grateful glance of the luminous black ones, and the little fair hands twisted in and out among the plates.

"Don't mention it, my dear; it is nothing! Why do you not eat? You taste nothing."

"I am not hungry, thank you! I want nothing but the tea. And now I think I will lie down, and sleep away this dizzy head."

"And I will take away these candles, lest they should tempt you to sit up and read; and I will lock your door to keep that little tomboy, Hazel, from breaking in," said Miss Forest, laughing and nodding. "And now, my love, good-night and pleasant dreams to you!"

She kissed her as she spoke—the little female Judas—and left the room, putting the key in her pocket. She glanced back at it from the head of the stairs with a cold, glittering, evil smile.

"They may be pleasant to-night, pretty Eve," she said, softly, "but they will hardly be so sweet to-morrow night. You shall never be D'Arville's bride until my brain loses its power to plot, and my right hand its cunning to work."

She clenched the little digits fiercely as she spoke, and went down-stairs to the parlor.

Hazel and D'Arville were there: the former jingling away at the piano; the latter holding a book, but seeing only a pair of black eyes, a shower of black curls, and a very young face, fresh and sunshiny as Hebe's own, looking up at him from every page.

Hazel stopped clattering the "Wedding March," whirled round on her stool and faced Una.

"Where's Eve?"

"In her room."

"Ain't she coming down?"

"Not to-night, she says. She has courted on her forehead, and feels light-headed after her fall, so has gone to bed. I locked you out for the night."

"Locked me out!" shrilly cried Hazel.

"What is that for?"

"She thinks she will feel better alone, I suppose. All I know is, you are to keep your own room to-night."

"The hateful mean thing! I'll go and sleep in the attic with one of the maids, before I roost alone in there among all the ghosts and rats and other vermin. Eve's nothing but a nasty selfish thing!"

"My dear, if you are really afraid," said Miss Forest, blandly, "you can share my chamber for this one night."

"Oh," said Hazel, wilting down suddenly at the proposed cure, which was worse than the disease, "I guess I sha'n't mind it so much, after all. If Eve and the rest of you can face the ghosts alone, I dare say I can, too. Well, what's the matter now?"

For Miss Forest, putting her hand in her pocket suddenly, uttered a sharp exclamation of alarm.

D'Arville lifted an inquiring face from his book.

"I have lost my purse, and it contained

money to a large amount! I had it when I was out in the grounds this afternoon. I must have dropped it there."

D'Arville rose up.

"The night is clear as day; permit me to go out and search for it, Miss Forest."

Miss Forest hesitated.

"It is so much trouble."

"It is no trouble at all. In what part of the grounds were you?"

"Oh, in several places; but I think I may have dropped it near the old well, at the ash-trees. You know the place? I remember pulling my handkerchief out there to throw over my head, and may have pulled the purse out with it."

"What kind of purse was it?"

"A portmanteau of gold and ebony. It was a gift from a dear friend; and, independent of the money it contained, very valuable to me on that account. Hazel and I will go with you and help in the search."

The three started. All traces of the thunder-storm had disappeared, and the full moon rode in a cloudless sky, studded with countless stars.

As D'Arville had said, it was clear as day, and the old house looked quaint and picturesque in the silvery rays.

"What a lovely night," Una exclaimed. "Who says it is all fog in England? Your blue Canadian skies were never brighter than that, Monsieur D'Arville!"

"The night is glorious, and old England a very pleasant place, Miss Forest. Hazelwood looks charming by moonlight."

"And Eve's gone to bed!" sentimentally put in Hazel, following his glance. "Her room is all in the dark. That's a bra-new idea of hers; for late she has taken to sit at the window and star-gaze. I believe the girl's in love!"

"And who is the happy man, *petite*?" smilingly inquired Una.

"Oh, a friend of ours; either Señor Mendez, Mr. Schaffer, or Monsieur D'Arville, here. And," said Hazel, with an innocent face, "I really don't know which."

The dark Canadian face of D'Arville lit up with its rare smile.

"Mademoiselle, I thought Mr. Schaffer was your property?"

"Well, that's the very reason why Eve might want him too. One girl always does what another possesses, and tries to cut her out. I know I should myself!"

"A very amiable trait in young ladies' characters. But, here we are at the ash-trees, and now for Miss Forest's purse."

But though they wandered up and down, and here and there, and in and out among the ash-trees, no glittering speck of gold and ebony flashed back the moonlight from the grass.

"We had better go over to the old well," said Una, anxiously; "it is just possible I may have dropped it there, and it is quite certain it is not here."

The "old well" was some half-dozen yards off—a lonesome spot, shaded by gloomy ash-trees, where few ever went. The three turned their steps in that direction—steps that awoke no echo on the velvet sward—when Hazel suddenly stopped and raised a warning finger.

"Hush!" she whispered; "listen to that!"

"It is voices," said D'Arville, lowering his own.

"Some one is at the old well before us, and may have found your purse."

"Let us see who they are," said Una. "We can do it without being seen ourselves. I don't want to lose the purse, if I can help it. And—"

She stopped short, and laid her hand over Hazel's mouth, to stifle the cry that was breaking from her at the sight they beheld. In the clear moonlight, under the old oak-trees, two figures stood distinctly revealed. There was no mistaking their identity. The tall young man was Paul Schaffer; the girl, wrapped in a large shawl familiar to all three, with strips of white plaster on her forehead, was Eve Hazelwood. Yes, Eve Hazelwood. There was no mistaking that beautiful face, that shower of shining hair, those lustrous black eyes, uplifted to the man's face. Together these two stood as only lovers stand, his arm encircling her waist, his head bent down until his own dark locks mingled with hers. They were talking, too, as only lovers talk; and as they moved away very slowly in an opposite direction, the listening trio distinctly caught every word. It was Paul Schaffer's laughing voice they heard first.

"Good-night, Miss Forest," he said; "let me thank you now for all the kindness you have shown me since I have been in this house. Be good to this poor little girl, and try and comfort her, if you can."

He was gone, and his door was shut. Una stood looking at it, with a puzzled face.

"What does he mean—thanking me now, and with that look? He cannot mean to go! Oh, pshaw! e'er come not! come along, Hazel!"

She drew Hazel along to her room—poor Hazel, who did nothing but cry, and began early preparing for bed.

"Don't be a baby," was her consolatory address; "wipe your eyes and go to bed! Let Mr. Schaffer go—he was only fooling you all the time, and everybody saw it but yourself!"

"Oh, I wish I was dead—I do!" was Hazel's wicket but natural cry, her passionate sobs only increasing for their comfort. "Oh, I wish they heard first."

"Miss Forest—if that be your name—I am mistress here, I think and accustomed to be obeyed. You do not set foot in my room, either to-day or any other day, while you see me to remain at Hazelwood Hall!"

"I shall inform Mr. Hazelwood to-morrow," said Miss Forest, firmly; "it is my duty to put a stop to such shameful doings. Miss Eve will find she must turn over a new leaf for the future."

D'Arville said nothing—his heart was far too sore and bitter for mere words. When they entered the house and stood in the upper hall, on the way to their apartments, he stopped at his door and held out his hand to Una.

"Good-night, Miss Forest," he said; "let me thank you now for all the kindness you have shown me since I have been in this house. Be good to this poor little girl, and try and comfort her, if you can."

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"What does he mean—thanking me now, and with that look? He cannot mean to go

Etta released herself blushingly, but the praise of her father's old friend fell very pleasantly upon her ears. As she drew back Kate advanced to Ossian, deeply impressed by what he had said, exclaiming:

"You may kiss me, too, if you like."

"Thank you, I'm not particular," responded Ossian, dryly; and he turned away.

"Oh!" murmured Kate, a little resentfully.

"Never mind; if he won't, I will!" cried Ray, roughly; and he gave her a resounding kiss.

"Oh!" murmured Kate, again, but not at all resentfully this time.

"What's the matter? Did it hurt you?" inquired Ray, with mock concern.

"Oh, no; but I think you are rather free on short acquaintance."

A hearty laugh from the rest followed, and then Bartyne said:

"Now we must get things in shape. Ossian, you summon your colored aid, and let her show the girls to their room. Let her take them up."

"I'll do that!" cried Ray.

Ossian fastened his gray eyes keenly upon the detective's face.

"Pears to me you're mighty obliging, young man," he said.

"I always try to be," answered Ray.

Ossian's gray eyes twinkled strangely.

"I feel as if I could kiss you, too," he rejoined.

"I beg you won't," returned Ray, and he retreated, as if he really thought Ossian was earnest.

Ossian chuckled to himself, went into the hall, called the colored woman, whose sudden appearance denoted that she was not very far off when she was called, and her anxiety to make herself useful.

The girls were shown to their room, which was the front chamber up one flight of stairs, and Ray carried up their trunk.

"He's as strong as a mule!" remarked Ossian, in his dry fashion.

"And as brave as a lion!" returned Bartyne

"You'll like him better, Ossian, when you come to know him better."

"So'll you, Peter?"

"No doubt—no doubt!"

The men gathered in the parlor again.

"Now to business," began Bartyne. "Did you close the office, Chester?"

"No, sir; I left Jim in charge. He can be trusted to take any new orders that may come. In fact, we can not supply any new customers, as you know. It is as much as we can do to supply the old ones."

"True; but we must go down to the office and put things in shape; this affair has unsettled matters. Then these villains must be attended to. Do you think it advisable to make a descent upon them to-night?" he inquired of Ray.

"Most decidedly. If we don't find them there to-night, we never will," answered the detective; "and I'm afraid it is too late as it is."

"Perhaps it is, but we'll make the attempt. Ossian, we will leave you here in charge."

"Are you going without your disguise Peter?" asked Ossian, for Bartyne had cast it off.

"No more disguises for me, Ossian. The villains must know I am alive by this time. Don't you think so?"

"Yes," responded Ray. "Doctor Water-vliet could tell them that. How cheap they must have felt when they arrived and found Etta gone. Ha! ha! ha!"

His laugh was so infectious that they all joined in it.

"Well, it will be some little time before they can trace us here," said Bartyne; "and we must try to trace and secure them first. We won't be back here until late, Ossian."

"Very well."

"Come?"

"One moment," said Ossian; "I want to speak to this young man first."

"You haven't another presentiment of evil, eh, Ossian?" Bartyne asked, uneasily.

"Oh, no; I see nothing but good before us now. You go on, and wait for him at the gate."

Bartyne and Chester Starke left the house, wondering at this singular proceeding on the part of Ossian Plummer.

"Well, my friend, what have you to say to me?" asked Ray, when they were alone.

Ossian laid his hand impressively upon the young man's arm.

"I know who you are," he said.

Ray stared in astonishment into the gray eyes of that hard-featured face, and the gray eyes smiled kindly upon him.

"The deuce you do!" he exclaimed.

"I do!" responded Ossian, nodding his head significantly.

Ray laughed, crying:

"Well, that's odd! for a week ago I didn't know myself. You're a long-headed, keen-witted individual."

"I'm a Yankee, and we're given to guessing. Do you mean to tell him?"

"Of course, but not yet."

"When?"

"When this cruel war is over—that is to say, when my enemies are destroyed—my enemies as well as his!"

"Why not now?" urged Ossian, laying his hand affectionately upon the young man's shoulder.

"It is not time; the case is not worked out yet. Let me finish up this business first."

Ossian reflected over this for a moment.

"Perhaps you are right," he answered. "Go then, but be careful of yourself, be careful of him."

"You can depend upon that. Take care of yourself, old boy!"

With this parting salutation, Ray hastened to join Peter Shaw and Chester Starke, whom he found waiting for him at the gate.

"What did Ossian have to say to you?" inquired Peter Shaw.

"Not much," answered Ray. "He wished to impress the necessity of caution in our proceedings upon my mind."

"Yes; Ossian is prudence personified. In fact he has rather astonished me during this visit of his to New York. He seems changed in a measure—different from his old self."

"How so?"

"Why shrewder and keener."

"He's smart!" rejoined Ray, with conviction.

"You like him, then?"

"Very much!"

"I thought you would. There's a good heart within his rugged breast. Ossian Plummer is a friend in a thousand. He is honest itself, and as steadfast to his trust as the green hills of his native State. Ah! I should not be where I am to-day if it had not been for Ossian Plummer and his sister Almira. He's shrewd enough, but he's superior in intellect. She's the smartest woman I ever saw. Don't you think so, Chester?"

"I do indeed, sir."

Conversing in this manner they walked to

third avenue, and there took passage on a car down-town.

Jim Bates was delighted to see them when they arrived at the office, having grown somewhat weary of being left there alone.

An hour was devoted to business, and then Genny Bartyne (I may as well drop the name of Mrs. Shaw now) and Frank Ray went to the police headquarters in Mulberry street to make arrangements for the capture of the False Faces that night.

This matter being settled, Frank proposed that they should take a stroll by the house that contained the lodge room of the False Faces.

"It's a roundabout way to your office, sir," he said, "but I think it might be advisable if you could spare the time."

"Certainly," answered Bartyne.

They walked in that direction, and as they walked briskly they soon reached the house.

"I thought so!" exclaimed Ray, pausing at the door.

"What is it?" inquired Bartyne.

"Do you perceive any change here?"

Bartyne surveyed the house.

"The blinds of the doctor's windows are closed," he answered.

Bartyne looked again.

"I don't perceive anything else," he replied.

"Where's his sign?" inquired Ray.

"Why, it's gone!"

"Yes; and the doctor's gone, too!"

"Do you think so?"

"Yes, sir, the birds are flown. I thought they would not stop long here. They are wide awake, sir; they were not going to give us a chance to catch them. Our only hope was to surprise them. Our coming for Etta gave them the alarm."

"But if we had left her an hour longer in their hands they would have spirited her away to some retreat which we might have been weeks in searching for."

"Very true, sir."

"I had rather that they should escape than that any harm should befallen her."

"You were right, sir; so had I; but, I confess, I feel a strong anxiety to trap these rascals—and I shall never feel satisfied until I do."

"You think then that they have abandoned this house?"

"Undoubtedly, sir. Don't you see the bill: Apartments to Let?"

"Really, you appear to notice everything," answered Bartyne, surprisedly. "I did not attack any particular significance to that as there are bills on both the houses upon either side, as you see."

"Oh, yes, there's always some apartments to let in these kind of houses, and so the bill 'To Let' becomes a chronic attachment to the door-post. But I observed in this bill that the apartments to let are the very ones occupied by the doctor and the False Faces; and there is a newness to this bill which shows that it has been renewed to-day."

"Upon my word! your discernment is of the keenest kind!" exclaimed Bartyne, approvingly. "I never should have noticed that."

"It's my business, sir. The smallest trifles sometimes leads to a great result."

Ray rang the bell vigorously, and they could hear it through the door sounding loudly in the hall.

"What are you about to do now?" inquired Bartyne.

"Make some inquiries to see if those fellows have left any clue by which they may be traced; I hardly expect it though."

The door opened, and the slatternly female, who had charge of the premises, appeared.

"Can you tell me where Doctor Water-vliet has moved?" inquired Ray, in his most winning manner.

"He's gone out of town," replied the female.

"Out of town?" echoed Ray; he had not expected such an answer as this. "Do you know which way?" he added.

"Yes. He told me that he had got a Government appointment to go to the navy yard at Pensacola, as they have got the yellow fever very bad down there."

"Ah! thank you. I see that the upper floor is let to let."

"Yes, the doctor had that as a surgery—he think he called it. Would you like to look at it, sir?"

"What's the rent?"

"Twelve dollars a month."

"Hum! no—I guess we won't trouble you—it's a little too high."

"Why that's cheap!"

"I allude to the altitude of the floor," answered Ray, laughingly. "I'm afraid it's too high up in the world for us. Thank you; good day!"

Ray walked away and Bartyne followed him.

"Do you think this doctor has really gone to Pensacola?" he inquired; when they had walked some little distance from the house.

"Not he! That's an ingenious device to throw us off the scent. He is still in the city, and I have a shrewd suspicion that his confederates are here also. But that nest is empty. There is no use making any descent there tonight. They've gone, bag and baggage."

"They're no doubt of that. They moved with a surprising celerity. I don't see how we are going to trace them now."

"That's for me to find out. They may baffle us at the start, but when the law begins to chase a party of scoundrels in earnest it's bound to run them down at last."

"What do you purpose to do next?"

"Hunt up this lawyer, Selkreg. I'm just going to his office now. I'd like to ascertain if he has gone out of town also."

"Shall I go with you?"

"Well, yes, it's on the way to your office, and it will satisfy your mind, and save me the trouble of making a report to you."

They proceeded to Center street and stopped at the dilapidated wooden house that bore Selkreg's sign upon it.

"Here's the shyster's office," said Frank Ray.

Going up the dingy stairs they found the door of Selkreg's office locked, and a card tacked upon it bearing this inscription: "Out of town."

Ray smiled as he saw it.

"I thought so!" he cried. "I've got a game of hide-and-seek before me."

They descended to the street.

"What next?" inquired Bartyne.

"You may as well go to your office, sir, and I will return to head-quarters," replied Ray.

"We can do nothing to-night, and I must change the arrangement. All you have to do now is to go on with your business as usual, and leave the affair in my hands. When I discover anything I will let you know."

On this they separated.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 252.)

A SUPPRESSED resolve will betray itself in the eyes.

The Dumb Page: OR, THE DOGE'S DAUGHTER.

BY FREDERICK WHITTAKER,
AUTHOR OF "THE IRISH CAPTAIN," "THE RED
RAJAH," "THE ROCK RIDER," "THE
SEA CAT," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE END OF ALL.

A GLOOMY picture was presented, some hours later, by the Secret Hall of the Council of Three.

This was the last dread tribunal of Venice, above even the better known Council of Ten.

Its sittings were held in secret. Judges and attendants were alike habited in black, and sworn to secrecy on all points.

In a deep, vaulted hall, or rather dungeon, built in the foundations of the ducal palace, the meeting was held. The massive stone arches, and great slabs of pavement, were faintly illuminated by the light of several swinging lamps, that hung from iron rings in the ceiling. The atmosphere was cold and damp, for the hall was below sea level, and the soaking waters were only kept out by

LOVE IN THE COUNTRY.

BY JOHN JOY, JR.

Oh, hand in hand, by sylvan streams,
We'd wander down at noon.
Our footfalls keeping measure with
The merry frogs' tune;
The sylvan nymphs would lead our way
When we went out to chop down hay.

Withdrawn afar from all the world
Content should lend its charm,
And crown with peace our mortal lot—
And eighty-acre farm
I'd shield her form from dangers thick,
And milking cows that love to kick.

No cloud should ever dim our sky
To make us grieve,
Eternal sunshine e'er should gild
Our heads in hoisting corn,
And patience e'er should be her bower
In churning butter hour by hour.

All jealousies and faults of faith
Should from our pathway shrink,
Affection she would have for me,
And buttermilk to drink;
And she should daily gather grace
And eggs upon the market days.

A golden halo of health rest
She'll wear o'er her head,
And she would keep her heart at peace
And all the goslings fed.
She'd keep our lives from being sad,
And mix some good eggs with the dead.

Her good should be my sole desire,
Her gentle will my law,
And plenty grace our dear estate—
Inherited from her parents,
In queenly robes she'll be arrayed.
All out of linsey-woolsey made.

The light of love should haunt her eyes,
The warmth of hope,
In bringing peace she should excel,
Also in making soap.
She'd make more sweet life's running sands,
And cook for six or seven hands.

Her life with all things fair and sweet
Let kindly fate endow,
And may she learn to love me more
And drive the glittering plow.
And our life's happiness would be great
If corn went a decent rate.

**The Snow Hunters:
OR,
WINTER IN THE WOODS.**
BY C. DUNNING CLARK,
AUTHOR OF "YOUNG SEAL-HUNTER," "IN THE
WILDERNESS," "CAMP AND CANOE,"
"ROD AND RIFLE," ETC., ETC.

X.—Canada Hare.—The Cunning Glutton.—Southward.

We might follow our hunters in the pursuit of the smaller game with which the woods abounded, and tell of the mink, the beaver and the otter which became the prey of stout Dave Blodgett and his new chum, but time does not permit. It is enough to say that they passed a pleasant month in the region of snow, and the sides of the cabin were hung with a hundred trophies of the chase. Heads of wapiti, moose and elk adorned the walls. The two panthers and the wolverine, beautifully preserved and stuffed, glared at all intruders from the roof of the cabin, and the two cubs, now playmates of Jack Edgel, played tricks with each other in a wooden cage in the corner, opposite two beautiful small "silver fox," which had been trapped by Alf especially for Jack Edgel. All this curiosity-shop was called by Rufe "Jack's Museum."

Dave came in, one morning, in a fury. A wolverine had been stealing beaver out of his trap, and he was determined to punish the thief.

"I'm goin' out to rig a deadfall, Jack," he said, "an' I'll catch that bloody thief, somehow. Come with me."

They started out and reached the place where the first trap had been robbed. In the path of this Dave set a large bear-trap, which he carefully concealed among the brushwood. Near the other trap which had been robbed, he rigged a deadfall baited with scented pemmican. To reach the bait the animal must crawl under the log, and the moment the bait was touched the log would fall.

"Dave," suggested Jack, when these preparations were concluded, "I have heard a great deal about the cunning of the wolverine, and I want to see them work. Can't we hide somewhere and watch him?"

"I'll do it," said Dave. "Cunning ain't no name for 'em. You'll see one of the 'cutest critters on the face of the earth, if you see him at all. Let's go an' knock over a few rabbits before supper, an' I'll make you a stew that'll make your eyes stick out of your head."

They tramped away through the snow for a distance of two miles, where they met Alf, who was leading Spot.

"All 'e'e time my catchum Canada hare," he said. "You got gun? All right — you watchee."

He loosed Spot on a fresh trail, and he bounded away on a hot scent, making the forest ring with his cries, as he howled over the snow. The cry receded and the men advanced in the direction of the sound.

Jack was in advance, when he saw a great hare, leaping like a kangaroo, come flying over the logs, while close behind came Spot, yelping as he bounded through the snow. Jack fired when the hare was in the air, and dropped his game neatly.

"Quick eye, steady hand," exclaimed Dave, approvingly. "You are the stuff we make hunters of, my chicken. Call in the dog, Alf, and let's try another."

The hound was again startled on a fresh scent, which took him some distance into the forest. As they advanced, a great white bird, gleaming like snow in the sun, rose over them. The ready rifle of Dave Blodgett came up and the great white bird came tumbling down. Dave caught it up and held it in such a way that the blood could not drop on its white plumage.

"That's a specimen that'll do yer heart good," cried Dave. "The 'grest snowy owl' my boy!"

It was indeed one of the most magnificent specimens of this rare bird ever secured by a hunter. White as the driven snow, with spreading wings and staring eyes, the great bird hung in the powerful hand of the hunter.

By this time the dog was on the scent again, and long before nightfall the hunters had secured a goodly "bag," and returned to the cabin, where they feasted gloriously.

Alf volunteered to take Mr. Tracey and the twins out on a farewell "fire hunt," while Jack and Dave started out to watch their wolverine. They reached the place early, and Dave constructed a cover near the first trap from which they could watch unseen the movements of the glutton.

The creature came two hours after, stealing along with cat-like steps until he came to the spot where Dave had thrown the brush carelessly over the trap. Here the animal paused and looked dubiously at the leaves and brush. There was a studied carelessness about the arrangement of this cover which did not suit the

suspicious beast. He seemed to say—"My friend was nabbed in just such a spot as that, and I strongly suspect iron under those bushes I do upon my word."

Some such idea as this must have passed through the head of the wolverine as he stood with his short ears working industriously and his head thrown upon one side like a cat.

He evidently deemed it highly improper to pass over those leaves and brush without first making an examination; so he searched about and found upon the ground a stout stick about three feet long and about an inch thick. This the wolverine took in his mouth, and allowing one end to rest upon the bush, pushed it before him in every direction, while Dave, in an agony of rage, made ready his rifle. Just then the stick happened to strike the spring, and behold the bear trap dangling in the air, while the wolverine walked serenely beneath and robbed the bear trap before their very eyes! Having devoured the game, the gluton began to search about for the second trap, which he had robbed the night before, and Jack, following Dave Blodgett, glided after in silence, and they crouched in the bushes just as the wolverine caught sight of the bait beneath the dead-fall.

One common sized beaver is a mere flea bite to a healthy wolverine, and this one was still as hungry as ever. He looked at that spiced "pemmican" with longing eyes. He knew that it was spiced pemmican — he could smell it, even at a distance, and knew that it was good. But, was there not something remarkable in the manner in which this food was hung under the log? Was not the log itself in rather a tottering position? and would it be at all healthy for a wolverine to creep under that log without first ascertaining that it was not going to fall down? The meat was good — but would it pay for the getting?

The wolverine considered the matter in all its bearings. He wanted the meat badly enough, but that was a heavy log.

"I'll study out, some way, the mean old cuss," hissed Dave; "but he don't git away this time. You jest wait."

The wolverine at last leaped upon the log, and digging his claws into the bark, reached down and pushed the meat hard. The dead-fall came down, but the wolverine sat triumphant on the top, seeming to exult over his own acuteness, but, just then came the crack of the never-failing rifle, and the animal dropped lifeless on the log.

"Chaw that, durn ye!" roared Dave. "That's a dead-fall you kain't dodge, an' I know it."

They returned quite late to the cabin, and began their preparations for the return to the haunts of civilization. The hunters came back with two deer which they had taken by fire-hunting on the ice.

The time for their tarry in the North was up, and they must return to their duties in the South. When morning broke they loaded the sleds, leaving many heavy articles in the cabin for the use of other hunters. Alf and Dave had built a third sled, and it was necessary, for Jack's trophies filled one sled to overflowing; and so, one bright morning they bade farewell to the winter camp, and sped away along the ice toward the South. Dave and Alf went with them, and did not part from them until two weeks later, when they shook hands at the G. T. depot in Toronto.

"Good-by, square; good-by, boys," said Dave. "Ef you want me next year write to me at Lower Sarnac. I'm going down that road now."

"All 'e'e same," said Alf. "Me catch Bill Becker my likewise him. Good-by!"

So they left the hunters standing on the platform as the train, bearing the trophies of their skill, safely packed in the baggage cars, moved off. And if Providence is good to them it will not be long before, with rifle and ax, with Dave Blodgett and Alf in front, they will again tramp the snows of the North, on the trail of the giant moose.

Reader, the Snow Hunters, for the present, bid you farewell.

LEAVES
From a Lawyer's Life.

BY A. GOULD PENN.

II.—The Unjust Will.

MEN sometimes make strange disposition of their property by will, and after their demise leave behind them a bone of contention for heirs to quarrel over, when a little foresight and sense of justice would have saved all the trouble and expense. Great injustice is thus done, perhaps through mere thoughtlessness or carelessness, and it seems to me that man in his senses would willingly commit such a grave error.

How often have I been called upon to draw the instrument that I plainly foresaw could only produce pain, hatred and heartburnings! But it was mine only to obey and not question the wisdom of my employers. A case in point once happened in my practice.

Stepping into my office one day, after a brief absence, I found a lady awaiting my coming. She was dressed in deep mourning, with a heavy veil over her face, and as I entered she arose and cast aside its black folds, revealing to my gaze a face of astonishing beauty. She was young, apparently not more than twenty, and her beauty was heightened by the look of unusual intelligence.

"You are Mr. Smith?" she asked, hesitatingly.

"At your service, Miss."

"Garnett is my name—Alda Garnett," she hastened to explain.

"Ah! yes, Miss Garnett; I knew your father well. What service can I render you, Miss Alda?"

"I have come to consult with you in reference to papa's will. You know the circumstances already, no doubt?"

Yes, I had heard of Johnson Garnett's will, and the master had been the cause of much indignation among the good people of the neighborhood. Johnson Garnett had been considered somewhat eccentric in his manners. He had accumulated a large fortune, and Alda, his only daughter, had been looked upon by everybody as his sole heir, and respected, flattered and courted accordingly. But Johnson Garnett had brought with him from England many old and strange conceits, and when, at his death, his will was read, it was found that he had left to his faithful daughter but a trifle of a few thousands, while the remainder of his possessions, including Emerald Hill, his home, had been willed to one Johnson Kyle.

"And who is this Johnson Kyle?" I asked of Miss Alda.

"Some old friend of papa's—schoolmate or something, I believe. I have heard papa speak of him frequently, but I never have learned more of him."

"Is he at all related?" I asked.

"I do not know; he may be some distant

relative of papa's. But oh, Mr. Smith, can nothing be done by which I may obtain my just rights?" she asked, the tears gathering in her beautiful eyes.

"I fear it will be a difficult matter, Miss Garnett, to break this will, unless we can establish the fact that your father was under undue influence, or not of sound mind, and those things require very positive evidence indeed."

A gleam of hope lighted up her splendid eyes.

"I am sure papa was not in the mind to make that will!" she exclaimed. "He often told me he was his sole heir, and I can prove by old nurse that he said so more than once. And besides, we often feared he was not in his right mind, and many strange things he did."

Having obtained such information and facts of Miss Garnett as I deemed necessary, she left my office with lighter heart than she had entered.

I set about to work up the case, and after some time spent in study and examination, I drew the necessary papers for commencing suit to break the unjust will of Johnson Garnett. I soon learned that the firm of Leex and Brief had been retained against me, and I knew that the litigation must be long and tedious.

I also learned that the devisee, Johnson Kyle, was a rich man, who spent his time traveling the world over in search of pleasure and adventure, and that he had but recently returned to America.

A year had passed away, and the preliminaries of this great will contest were about settled, and soon the issue would be tried. Business called me away to a neighboring city, where I was detained several days.

Seated in the hotel, one evening, I was busy with my own thoughts, unheeding the usual loungers who were talking around me, when a name caught my ear and caused me to look and listen attentively.

Two young men had drawn chairs up to a neighboring window, and were lazily smoking their cigars and conversing in tones loud enough for me to hear. As they laughed and chatted, the name of Johnson Kyle fell from the lips of one of them, and it was this that had aroused me from my study.

"I say, Kyle, that is what I would consider a streak of remarkably good luck. Of course we attorneys were handsomely feed, of course, and the unjust will was effectually broken.

"But your part of the exchange?" I suggested.

"Ask Mr. Kyle; he is responsible."

"True," said Kyle; "I arrived here two weeks ago and went out to Emerald Hill to view my new possessions, and interview the one whom I suppose to be my legal opponent. You can judge of my surprise at meeting Miss Garnett, here, and we were soon on such good terms that the compromise we have just effected was agreed upon, and, in exchange for my interest in that will, she gave me—herself."

"Hear it is," said he, producing the will, "and here is its entire fulfillment," and saying this, he proceeded to tear the document into shreds.

"And now, gentlemen," he resumed, in his bluntest manner, "allow me, in behalf of Miss Garnett, and also as my own earnest wish, to invite you all to our wedding at Emerald Hill next Thursday evening."

We all went to the wedding, and I was the humble instrument chosen to give away the bride. Alda Garnett had won her own case, and conquered her opponent with a few glances from those splendid eyes.

"I say, Kyle, that is what I would consider a streak of remarkably good luck. Of course we attorneys were handsomely feed, of course, and the unjust will was effectually broken.

"It is she, and Ralph Tyrrell is with her,"

she said, peering out into the dusky twilight. "The little fool! I wonder if she thinks she can catch him?"

As there was no one to answer Miss Raynesford's question, it remained unanswered.

"I wonder people don't begin to talk about the way she carries on," said Miss Raynesford, to herself, by-and-by, the scowl still on her face. "Of course no one is fool enough to think he cares for her, unless she does; and as long as it can't end in marriage, I should think people would notice how she tries to keep him at her elbow, and smiles at him in her most bewitching way every time they meet. I think it really ridiculous, and I wish some one would tell her how such conduct appears to respectable people."

Miss Raynesford was like a great many men and women you and I know, ready to condemn other people for doing precisely what they would do themselves; and the principal reason why they condemn their fellows, as a general thing, is because they have succeeded where the fault-finders failed.

Miss Raynesford had tried to keep Ralph Tyrrell at her side, and failed to do so. Lettie Crawford had never attempted any thing of the kind, because there was no need of it. He seemed perfectly willing to stay, without her trying to keep him.

I don't think Lettie thought anything about what his intentions were. She believed him to be a gentleman, she liked him, and she was not foolish enough to keep him at a frigid distance because she was a poor girl and worked for her living. She was a pure, womanly woman, and as such, fit for the society of any man. Therefore she met Ralph Tyrrell and associated with him as equal. But to Miss Raynesford the fact that she worked for her bread was enough to keep her out of good society. The chief reason for Miss Raynesford's dislike, however, was that the man she would have been glad to marry saw more to admire in Lettie than herself—which, to an unprejudiced observer, was a proof of his good sense.

"Say, Kate," called out Miss Raynesford's brother Ned, bursting into the room like a gust of wind. "Isn't it almost April Fool day?"

"To-day's Tuesday," said Miss Raynesford.

"Fridays is the first of April. Yes, it's almost time for April fools."

When Ned had gone a brilliant idea came to her. Why couldn't she take advantage of the time and do something to make Lettie Crawford ridiculous? If she could do anything to discomfit her rival she felt it to be almost a religious duty to do so.

"I know what I'll do," she said, after an hour of study as to the best means of accomplishing her plan. "He has a new office downtown, and I don't believe she knows where it is. I'll write to her to call there on Friday; she'll go, and he will think it a ruse on her part, got up for the express purpose of an excuse for coming there, and when he sees how unwomanly such conduct is, he'll be apt to think less of you, Miss Lettie Crawford."

Which you will see does not exactly tally with Miss Raynesford's statement, that "of course he didn't care anything for Lettie." If she had been quite sure of that, she would have felt much easier about the matter.

The next day she wrote the letter that was to make Lettie Crawford ridiculous, requesting her to call at 25 Brown street, at ten o'clock on Friday; first door to the right, up-stairs.

"I hope it is for copying," said Lettie to her mother, when she had read the letter. "I could do a good deal at that evenings."

Friday came, and Lettie never once thought about its being April Fool Day. She went down the street past Miss Raynesford's, and saw that young lady smiling at her, as she passed. But the smile wasn't a very friendly one.

"Of course we heartily congratulated the young couple, and both Brief and Leex expressed themselves as highly pleased with the terms of settlement.

Again we entered the crowded court-room,

and I addressed the court:

"Your Honor, I am pleased to announce that this case is compromised to the entire satisfaction of all parties. We will, therefore, with your Honor's permission, withdraw a juror and consider this case dismissed."

As soon as the true condition of affairs became known, the spectators could scarcely be prevented from giving a shout of approbation. As it was they crowded about us, and sought to congratulate the young stranger and